

GETTING BETTER AT CHESS (WITHOUT CHESS COACH)

MIND SET

Repeat After Me

"You want to win the ALL games." "You want your 100% accuracy!"

When you play games or solving puzzle/tactics, you want 100% accuracy. You do not like mistakes! "You want to play the BEST MOVE **ever played!**"

Get your MIND SET **high level...**

All the Champions, All the Legends Do the Same.

(They HATE defeat with all their body and souls.)

If your mindset is low (for example: you say to yourself, losing one or two is OK, I fought well but lost, no problem)... this thinking will keep you low. (DO NOT DO THIS)

(But on other hand, losing is also part of game, whenever you do, you can console yourself by telling yourself. "Every lose is a Lesson, Analyse it and Learn where you went Wrong and Why. You cannot Win all the time. Losing is part of life. Get Up.. and Cheers.")

Until you don't have High Mindset - to be 100%, to be PERFECT.

You'll never be a Master Player. you cannot get high.

Biggest difference between Great Player and Amateur player is only this Mind Set. Low rated players don't take it serious while High rated players take consider it matter of Life and Death. (only on the board, during game)

And, TO GET this mindset, first thing you need to practice on **Chess Puzzles**. As your rating goes high, your puzzles get tougher, you can take more time but, try HARD, give your VERY BEST to solve those puzzles....

Chess Puzzles are to Brain as, Working-out is to Body Muscles.

(You can't be a GM overnight, as you can't have a 18 inch biceps overnight. As Body Muscles grow gradually with proper training and workout, so is Brain Muscles...)

Your Chess Brain Muscles gets Stronger, when you take heavy and heavier weight (means solving stronger and stronger puzzles)

And you know, those end sets, last repetitions are toughest ones. And those are most beneficial. You want to squeeze those last bit to get higher and higher.

Chess Puzzles already tell us there is a TACTIC. If you Knew It, still CANNOT solve it, means Brain Muscles needs to practice.

In Real Game, Player is unaware if there is a TACTIC if it arises on the board suddenly.

But Real thing is ... You Have to See Tactic WAY BEFORE MANY MOVES. (Seeing a Tactic which arises after few/many normal moves, is the real deal!)

“CHESS IS 99% TACTICS”

Solve atleast 1000 checkmate tactics first. Know the all Checkmate patterns with names (like Kiss of Death, Anastasia, Smothered, etc)

Then 5000 other Middle-Game tactics... (Like Fork, Pin, Double Attack, Discover Attach/Check, Decoy, Deflection, Desperado, Blocking etc...)

For this, you need to get Some course like **CT-ART, Perfect Chess Trainer or Chess.com Lessons** and solve some 5000 to 10000 Chess Tactics. But remember focus on accuracy, Take More Time But No Compromise with Perfection. (At the end, try to understand theme or motive of the Tactic, and if some tactics or resemblance with Pawn Structure arise from you Opening Repertoire, then focus on it more.)

[You can plan about it.... Like solving 1000 checkmate puzzles as fast as you can. And if you can solve it within a month. Then Go Again, but this time set your target to solve same puzzles in 15 days... and Go 3rd Time and set target to solve same 1000 puzzles in 7 days...

*(This Idea is taken from the book “**Rapid Chess Improvement**” by Michael de la Maza, and maybe similar idea was discussed by Jeremy Silman in his book “**How to Reassess Your Chess**”)]*

(I think, solving atleast 10,000 puzzles, at least once in your life is very important to get decent rating/or become a good player)

Daily, 10 to 30+ Tactics

Furthermore, I advise Mix your Tactics, Hard and Easy, and Very Easy. *(Chess.com do it automatically for you)*

And Checkmate Patterns tactics should be given priority.

Until you don't know all “**Checkmate Patterns with their Names**” (**Check Annex-1**) , let other tactics to wait.

Solve at least 1000 Checkmates Tactics twice ASAP.

OPENINGS

Playing every time random opening or random moves without preparation will not much improve your chess.
(Even GM's do not do it in Serious Tournaments, they never delve into jungle without preparation.)

In 1st phase, you have to make your **Opening Repertoire**.

For that, first you have to...

Know Your Style.

Go through all Openings in nutshell,
then choose One Opening from White (e4/d4/c4/or...)
And choose Two Openings from Black (against e4, against d4)

Of course we have to work out all side lines, also.
Get some lectures from renowned Chess Tutors, study your Opening deeply

Check **Opening Explorers and Power Books**, and check whether line has good reputation or not.
Also run engines and check what engines think for certain position in Opening..

In this regards.

Make your all Opening Studies at some place, like software or some site like LiChess Study.

Keep checking PowerBooks and Opening Explorers (only played by GMs, not lower players)

This is, to some extent **"Once in a lifetime work"**.

You have to do this ONCE, until you get some descent rating.

Once you are GM, then you can do more research work on Openings...

So you have to play chess **systematically**, instead of going random every time.

And **sole purpose** of opening is either getting advantage, or at least getting playable middlegame or better endgame.

Know Your Opening idea-wise, What is Idea? What is Purpose? Instead of memorizing moves without understanding it.

And also if you **Know Yourself better**, then you might workout better way, which Opening might suit you, or which position in middle game arising from certain variations suits you or not. (In this regards, no one can help you except yourself.)

[it might happen, you “don’t **like** certain opening for unrealistic reason, like for example you don’t like French, because your boyfriend was French and he deceived you... So you have to be realistic and adopt and not adopt certain opening only for good reason.]

Every Opening is, in itself, as a Different World... and knowing and understanding one world is itself and bigger challenge. If you don’t have much time, then its already better idea to stick with one Opening and everytime try to play Best Move and every time, try to figure out what could be better, or where you went wrong.

So , in nutshell.

1. Know Your Style
2. Select Your Openings
3. Get Some Lectures
4. Check Opening Explorers and Use Engines
5. And **Make Your Opening Repertoire.**

And yes keep watching Masters games on your Opening.

MIDDLEGAME

1. Tactics

In middlegame, many things can be put in Consideration.
Starting from Bottom to TOP.

1st thing is **JUST TACTICS!** “Chess is 99% Tactics, Don’t Forget”

Your eyes always be looking Just TACTICS all the time
If there is any (then calculate properly) or try to create by yourself.

2. Calculations

2nd Important Thing is **CALCULATION!**

Intuition is one thing which works where calculation does not work.

But **Chess is Math!** If you calculate properly much ahead, you have already upper hand.

(Sometimes positionally it looks awkward, but if calculations works, no matter how awkward it looks, Its Winning, ... and those moves get “!!” by annotators later.)

(But calculations do not mean doing random things. It comes with Idea, what is the purpose of every move, and what best options your opponent must play in reply, and what you have to play in response and why... and so on...)

If Things seems tougher... make it simple... just focus on Forks and Pins (potentially) or setting up Discover Attack. Or attacking some undefended piece.

Every move should be Attack or Threat!

3. Chess Vision

In this “calculation process” **CHESS VISION** is another important thing. Strong players have very vivid chess vision, like they look ahead and don’t do mistakes. While beginner might do mistakes often and forgot if certain PIECE/CHESSMAN is at certain place/position during calculations. But they did not see it and forgot about it, and thus calculation fails. Therefore, re-assessing position again and again is important.

What Changing Happens on Board after Each Move (Calculation with Knowledge)

*(Calculation without knowledge is half waisted.
But calculation with knowledge is fully fruitful)*

When Your Opponent Play His Move.

When one chessman is played, it always leaves something behind.

Always ask question to yourself, **What It Left Behind?**

After every move, look at the board/position, like a new position, what it has changed? (What piece or squares it was defending before, and now they are not defended anymore), or maybe he is threatening something, or what is his motive ...

If nothing happens, then you may improve your position, check if some of your piece might get better place, exchange your bad piece with opponent’s good piece.

And Even if that is not happening then evaluate the endgame position.
/Look for better endgame.

And even this is not happening, then play a “**Prophylactic Move**”.

Always Know this philosophy...

Longer the Game... more chances for lower rated player to do Mistake or Go Wrong.

♟ **“Lengthy games always favor for better players.”**

And this logic works in every sport. For example in Cricket T20, there is higher chances that low rated team might win against high rated team. And if it becomes T10 game, then the winning ratio between high and low rated team will be decreased. But when it comes to Test Match then it is more like High Rated team will win.

So, in chess, if you are better player than your opponent, and in middle game, if you don't see any chances to win, then simply elongate the game (making normal moves, make chessmen back and forth)...

Low rated players will sure stumble somewhere... (and also they have less tendance to draw, therefore their mindset is Do or Die... if they don't see chances of “Do”, then sure they “Die”!)

(and that's what Capablanca did all the time... and won the games which were considered Drawish)

And if the situation is reverse, then do the reverse. (it means if your opponent is much stronger, then hypothetically your more chances lie in Tactical Short Game.)

(What to do) When it's Your Move.

One simple answer is :

First Thing you should check if it is safe to play. (you are not making any mistake) ... and you can do it practically, asking question to yourself what reply your opponent can play.

If it is all OK, then wait.. and check how many ways you can play it. and check

How Many Ways You Can Play It? (Variation/Variety of Move)

For example, Your White Queen is at f3 and in next move you want to attack Black's h7 pawn with checkmate threat. So the most obvious move feels to play Qh5, but you have also Qh3 and Qe4 variations too with same idea. So check all possibilities (varieties) then figure out which variety could be most beneficial.

⇒ So in nutshell.. in Middle Game.

Focus on **Tactics**, and **Calculations** and **Chess Vision**, and finally check **Move Varieties**.

4. Knowledge of Middlegame

For Middlegame, getting more and more knowledge is always plus point. Like Watching Video Lectures and any sort of Training Material, Watching GM's Games etcetera...

NEVER PLAY AUTOMATIC CHESS

Instead

Calculate and check the move which should be better in a position, instead of playing automatic chess.

(When you'll solve Puzzles, you'll see Most Obvious Moves are Often Wrong"... and sometimes they double bluff... and most obvious move IS Actually Right... So Real Thing lies only in CALCULATE MATHEMATICALLY.. because two plus two is always four whether is

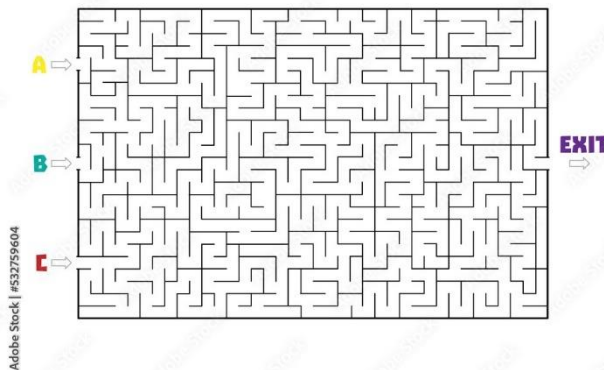
2 + 2 or if it is $\sqrt{(8 + 2) \times 2} - \frac{12}{3} + 6 \div 3 - 4$

Until you become very strong player, I think not much energy and time should be surfed on Middlegame (**except solving Tactics, Tactics is Chess, Chess is Tactics. Pawn might be soul of chess or not, but Tactics are not doubt soul and body of chess.**), but after making Opening Repertoire, much energy and time should be surfed on Endgame.

ENDGAME

This is the phase where you should really work.

Take an example of Maze Game.



Entry points could be many, and those can lead to many more different paths/ways/variations... **But Exit Correct point is only one.**

Maybe you played this game in childhood and became a cheeky and did a cheat little bit ... by solving it from Exit to Start (instead of Start to End) ... because that is the shortest way to solve it.

Means many puzzles could be easily solved if “**Reverse Engineering**” is done.

Somehow, same logic also works in chess.

(if you have a little pawn advantage, and if you can see the winning pawn endgame, then you can simply exchange all other pieces and pawns and win the game!)

(sometimes, I assume, somehow Capablanca knew this logic when he was 4 years old. Like he said. Give me one extra pawn, I'll exchange all pieces and pawns, then win endgame. Simple!

His losing percentage in Endgame is $\approx 0.88\%$)

“[Capablanca lost fewer than **5 games in the endgame phase** (out of 19 losses of his career), as most of his losses came in earlier phases (opening

or middlegame), often due to rare blunders or against opponents who managed to outplay him before reaching an endgame.]”

After **Tactics**, **Endgame** is 2nd most important thing to be taken seriously.

You NEVER be a GM, if you don't know the Endgame.



There are many Endgame Positions to be understand and practice.

Imagine, if you can memorise (atleast) 1000 Endgame Positions, and Understand them and successfully Practice them to Checkmate.

(Chess Game will be very Easy right? Like. From Opening Repertoire, you can take game from move 1 to middlegame either with Advantage or atleast Equal Game. ... then there will be little shuffling of moves in Middle Game. ... and then if you have a little advantage and you can see/predict winning/favorable Endgame position, you can exchange material and have the Endgame Position, which you already practiced.)

For Endgame Practice, I'd suggest.

1. Chess.com Lessons/Lectures and
2. ChessTempo Endgames Lessons and Drills
3. Chess King (CT-Art team) has also many Chess Ending apps.
4. Chess Endings (android app)

- Now, HINT is: if your Endgame becomes good, and your middlegame is weak, then you can simply exchange big guns quickly and go to Endgame, where many low-rated players falter.



Now. One who wants to be **GM** or Strong Player, he needs to be **Master** in all **three phases of game**.



(it is that easy to say)

Chess Knowledge (Bonus)

If you study chess all the time, then hopefully chess knowledge increases your chess understanding and recognition of patterns.

But if you don't (study chess) then You Might Lose Many Games just because of "not knowing it" or at least it may become harder to work out.

(For example, if you knew that "two connected passed pawns on 6th rank is more powerful than a rook" that knowledge led you to win a game or you might lose a chance to win just not knowing it.)

Summary

⇒ Playing systematic and **perfect chess** is the Main Mindset of all great players. And it starts with move 1st.

⇒ Therefore, working out on **Opening Repertoire** once in a lifetime is crucial.

If **Chess is Rocket**, then Opening is its Starting Point. And little diversion in Opening/Starting means you'll end up in totally different location, different endgame....

And this is only phase in game where you can memorise the moves.

But Opening is just starting point. Spending too much time in this phase is also waste of time. *(sometimes slow and steady also wins the race)*
(Opening Repertoire is just a Boost up thing. Its better to have it. But having Basic Opening Knowledge and not falling in any opening traps, will survive you this desert...)

⇒ In **Middlegame**, **Tactics** and **Calculations** is a **Real Chess**.

⇒ While **Endgame** simply defines **Who Will Win the Game**.

“All's well that ends well.”

Psychology

Psychology/Peace of Mind also plays a vital role, especially during serious tournaments. You have all the knowledge (most of it) Only implementing confidently OTB is required.

As it is said, **“Practice Makes Perfect”**, therefore in this regard you have to play more and more tournaments, to get used to it.

If you feel pressure, I can share few words to make it ease.

- Chess is a Game, all games are invented for “fun”. Win or lose, have fun to play it.
- Chess is Battle of Minds. But its not battle of two minds, but it is battle of your only mind. Your Mind Against Your Studies, all the lessons/lectures/puzzles or so, how much you can implement perfectly in your own game?
It’s like your opponent only challenges you to check your ability. Like he says.
Ok, Are You Trained Enough? Let Me Create some toughest position for you, Win from it? Can You Do It?
(If Win becomes Impossible, then Don’t be silly to play risky move, Draw is also winning if you’re losing!)
- Low rated players tend to win or lose (they don’t go for draw/ drawish position). As long as you don’t give them “Attacking Chances”, most probably they are going to blunder at some place.

Attacks do strange things!

(as Tal says people cracks under attacks)

- When you play, just play the one move at the time. You have to play just current position, that’s all. What is the best move in this position? That is only the question.

Last Thing:

One should remember, Chess is a game to be “played”. (Like Swimming)
You can **study** about it, but you’ll learn only when you wet your feet/get in the water.... so **Practice** and **Play!**

(but remember whenever you do, Do it Perfectly.)

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Sukkur

<https://ratings.fide.com/profile/7806116>

[1st-Dec-204]/modified after writing draft in 2021

Anne-1 – CHECKMATE PATTERS NAMES

1. Back Rank
2. Kiss of Death
3. Scholars Mate
4. Legals Mate (f7/f2)
5. Anastasia (vertical/horizontal)
6. Bishop and Knight (bishop covering long diagonal)
7. Bishop and Knight (when bishop is not on long diagonal the Knight must cover the corner square like Ng3, covering h1)
8. Sneaky Mate (Rd8#)
9. Smothered Mate
10. Bodens Mate (Two Bishops Mate)
11. Fools Mate
12. Finger Fahler Mate
13. Tail Mate (Gueridon's Mate)
14. Greco's Mate (Epaulette var.)
15. Arabian Mate (Rook and Knight)
16. Blackburne Mate (Two Bishops)
17. Lolli's Mate (Qg2# with help of pawn at f3)
18. Mayet's Mate (Bb2 Rh8#)
19. Shepherds Mate (Bb2 Qxh6+)
20. Anderssens Mate (ver. of Mayet but pawn at g7)
21. Pillsbury's Mate (Bc3 discovered check from R of b file)
22. Damiano's Pawn at g3 Qh2#
23. Morphy's Mate (Rook and Bishop)
24. Epaulette Mate
25. Two Rooks on 7th Rank
26. Two Rooks on a file
27. Two Knights Mate
28. One Knight Mate (while other pieces pinned) (as in Carro Kann trap)
29. One Queen Mate (Englund Gambit)
30. Knight Bishop Mate (bishop on long diagonal)
31. Bishop Knight Mate (bishop on small diagonal)
32. Queen & Bishop (like Boden/Bad Cold)
33. Queen & Knight
34. Rook & Bishop
35. Rook & Knight (Arabian Mate)
36. Knight & Rook/Queen (Anastasia Mate)
37. Knight & Pawn
38. Two Bishops from same side (as checkmate)
39. One Rook Mate (supported by any piece)
40. Rook and Bishop (Rd8#)
41. Knight and Rook (Mate with Knight)
42. Two Knights and Two Bishops (mating minors)
43. Dicovered (Double Check) Mate (Cross Fire)
44. Pawn Mate (Smothered with Pawn)

I Asked ChatGPT 3.5,

(What is the most important thing in Chess, to get 2000 elo fast?)

(Date: 7-Dec-2024)

Reaching a 2000 Elo rating quickly in chess requires focused effort on key areas of improvement. Here are the most important aspects to prioritize:

1. Master Opening Principles

- Focus on understanding **opening principles** rather than memorizing too many moves:
 - Develop pieces toward the center.
 - Castle early for king safety.
 - Avoid unnecessary pawn moves or premature attacks.
- Learn a **reliable opening repertoire** that suits your style, e.g.,:
 - **For White:** Stick with 1.e4 or 1.d4 and learn the basic plans for your preferred openings.
 - **For Black:** Pick openings like the French Defense, Sicilian Defense, or Caro-Kann against 1.e4, and the Queen's Gambit Declined or Slav against 1.d4.

2. Tactical Training

- Regularly solve tactics puzzles to sharpen your ability to spot winning moves, forks, pins, and other motifs.
- Dedicate at least 30 minutes daily to solving puzzles on platforms like Chess.com or Lichess.
- Focus on accuracy and speed in recognizing recurring patterns.

3. Understand Middlegame Strategies

- Learn common middlegame plans related to your openings, such as pawn breaks, piece coordination, and attacking motifs.
- Study basic strategic concepts:
 - **Piece activity:** Develop pieces to active squares.
 - **Pawn structures:** Understand weaknesses like isolated pawns or doubled pawns.
 - **King safety:** Prioritize attacking if your opponent's king is weak.

- Analyze games by players in the 2000–2200 Elo range for practical examples.
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4. Improve Endgame Skills

- Know the basics, such as:
 - **King and pawn endings:** Opposition and triangulation.
 - **Rook endgames:** Lucena and Philidor positions.
 - **Minor piece endgames:** Key principles like "bishops are stronger than knights in open positions."
 - Spend time with endgame books or lessons, as this phase is often overlooked by sub-2000 players.
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5. Play Regularly with Purpose

- Compete in longer time-control games (e.g., 15+10 or 30+0) to develop deep thinking.
 - Analyze your games post-match to understand mistakes and missed opportunities.
 - Identify recurring errors—whether tactical blunders, time management, or positional misunderstandings—and work on them.
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6. Study Games and Patterns

- Study master games in your openings or middlegame themes.
 - Use annotated games to understand the reasoning behind moves.
 - Platforms like ChessBase, online forums, and YouTube provide great content.
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7. Consistency Over Time

- Dedicate at least 1–2 hours daily to chess improvement.
 - Focus on targeted learning instead of random activities.
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Tools to Help You Reach 2000 Elo:

- **Books:** "My System" by Aron Nimzowitsch, "Silman's Complete Endgame Course," and "Logical Chess: Move by Move."
- **Platforms:** Chess.com, Lichess.org, and Chessable for interactive lessons and puzzles.
- **Coaching:** Consider hiring a coach to guide you through specific weaknesses.

The key is a **disciplined mix** of tactical practice, positional understanding, and practical gameplay. Combining these areas with consistent effort will help you climb to 2000 Elo effectively.

I asked ChatGPT

(How to be GM in Chess?)

Becoming a Grandmaster (GM) in chess is one of the highest achievements in the game and requires a combination of skill, dedication, and strategy. Here's a step-by-step guide on how to achieve this title:

1. Understand the Title Requirements

- **FIDE Rating:** You must achieve a minimum FIDE rating of 2500 at any point in your career.
- **Norms:** Secure three Grandmaster norms, which are earned by achieving strong performances in FIDE-sanctioned tournaments. These norms usually require:
 - A performance rating above 2600.
 - Facing other titled players, including at least three GMs.
 - Playing against opponents from various federations.

2. Build a Strong Foundation

- **Master the Basics:** Understand fundamental chess principles, openings, middlegame strategies, and endgame techniques.
- **Study Games:** Analyze games played by strong players, focusing on understanding strategies and decision-making processes.

3. Play Regularly

- **Tournament Experience:** Participate in rated tournaments frequently to improve your skills and climb the rating ladder.
- **Diverse Opponents:** Play against players of varying strengths to adapt to different styles.

4. Engage in Continuous Learning

- **Coaching:** Work with experienced coaches or grandmasters who can guide you in improving specific aspects of your game.
- **Resources:** Use books, videos, and online platforms like Chess.com, Lichess, and others to enhance your knowledge.

5. Work on Physical and Mental Fitness

- Chess requires long hours of focus and stamina. Regular physical exercise and mental conditioning can improve your performance.

6. Specialize in Openings

- Develop a strong repertoire of openings that suit your style. Understanding typical plans and structures in your preferred openings can give you an edge.

7. Focus on Norm Opportunities

- Participate in tournaments that provide the chance to earn norms. These often feature a mix of titled players and international competition.

8. Review and Reflect

- Analyze your games post-tournament to identify mistakes and areas for improvement. Use chess engines and feedback from stronger players for deeper insights.

9. Build a Support System

- Join a chess club or federation that provides access to tournaments, resources, and a community of motivated players.

10. Patience and Persistence

- Becoming a GM is a long-term goal that can take years. Maintain dedication, learn from setbacks, and keep improving. If you're already serious about chess and making steady progress, consider these steps as part of a structured plan. Every player's journey to GM is unique, but a consistent and disciplined approach can get you there.